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STRENGTHENING DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NATION



Strengthening Disaster Recovery for the Nation

STAKEHOLDERS FORUM

New York City, New York

Time: November 10, 2009, Tuesday
8:30 AM – 12:00 PM (Eastern)
1:30 PM – 5:00 PM (Eastern)

Note: This product is provided as a general summary only, not a transcript of the discussion.



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NOTE: This document contains the compilation of comments gathered from the VTC.



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Overview Of Stakeholder Forum Process

Format

Two (2) Stakeholder Forums were held in New York City: A morning and afternoon session. After a brief introduction participants were divided into Breakout Groups for the morning session; for the afternoon. They were asked to comment on 16 White House-prepared questions divided by theme:

- **DEFINING SUCCESS:** (Four (4) questions + *What else would you like us to know?*)
- **BEST PRACTICES:** (Six (6) questions + *What else would you like us to know?*)
- **ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES + COORDINATION:** ("Five [5] questions + *What else would you like us to know?*")

At the end of the Breakout Session, a spokesperson for each group summarized their group's discussion to the General Assembly.

Invitation Process

Invitational participation for the Stakeholder Forums was similar to that of the video teleconferences (VTCs). States were given the responsibility for inviting participants; however, greater encouragement was given to the States to include participation beyond Federal and State agencies and departments, to be more inclusive of those representing nonprofits, faith-based and private sectors, local governing authorities and others.

Goals + Results

- **Maximize participation.** The facilitation format offered every person an opportunity to contribute in a small group discussion.
 - **Result:** *Every participant had a chance to participate. All participants were offered an opportunity for additional input through the Web site.*
- **All questions addressed.**
 - **Result:** *While each question was not addressed by all participants, all questions were addressed by at least one (1) Breakout Group and usually more.*
- **Multiple perspectives represented in the conversation.**
 - **Results:** *Nonprofits, public sector representatives, etc, were called upon by Facilitators within individual Breakouts to ensure specific viewpoints were included in the conversation.*
- **A disaster recovery conversation occurred** (as opposed to response).
 - **Results:** *A recovery conversation was encouraged by using the "setup" found in the Facilitators' Narrative to frame the conversation. State and city partners, The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and The Federal Emergency*



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Management Agency (FEMA) senior leadership and Facilitator staff used “framing” comments in opening remarks. Breakout Group facilitators repeated “framing” comments within individual groups.



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DEFINING SUCCESS



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Defining Success

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Participants in the Stakeholders Forum shared opinions regarding what defines a successful recovery. To a group, they think community involvement in recovery and successful communications are essential for recovery success. The general school of thought is the better the lines of communications across all stakeholders, the more successful and timely recovery becomes. What varies are the different approaches suggested to engage the community and facilitate the sharing of information. There is a consensus that increasing pre-disaster community education of recovery processes and vesting those processes with more flexibility are needed.

Participants note that an appropriate, agreed upon, articulated and visible mission drives recovery. Managing expectations is important and participants say the involvement of the community in the recovery process and “self-identification” of needs is key. With regard to when is recovery considered a success, they pose the following questions: *Is recovery a success once basic services are restored? Or: Is it when the community is brought back to pre-disaster conditions? Or: Does success occur when the community feels prepared to handle the next disaster successfully? And: Who is defining success — local communities, State authorities and/or Federal partners?*

EMERGING THEMES

The following major themes emerged during the Stakeholders Forum as participants discussed defining recovery success.

- **Communication + Outreach + Education**
- **Mitigation + Planning and Preparedness**
- **Recovery Measurement + Recovery Phases**
- **Recovery Leadership**



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Communication + Outreach + Education

Community outreach and education are prevalent themes the discussions. Participants emphasize the importance of clear lines of communications across all levels of governmental authority, and between recovery leadership and the community. Those segments include Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), nonprofits, faith-based and secular organizations, volunteer groups, recovery stakeholders and partners, and members of the disaster-impacted community. Communication needs to be constant, transparent and ongoing from response through recovery to be effective. Communications strategies need to be managed across multiple levels of authorities, including local, Tribal, State and Federal and across programs offering recovery assistance.

Participants believe widespread public education of recovery processes and available services is an important strategy to help achieve recovery success as well as helping to streamline recovery processes. The more people know, the more empowered they are and the more self-reliant and self-sufficient (resilient) they become. Participants want education efforts to promote the availability and importance of grant and other assistance processes and to facilitate access to available services. Outreach, public education and awareness building strategies need to be targeted to all levels of recovery authorities and stakeholder involvement. It should be noted that participants feel appropriate flexibility in processes — both in accessing and applying recovery resources — needs to be considered and communicated to all levels as well.

Mitigation + Planning and Preparedness

Participants agree there are opportunities to promote mitigation throughout the recovery process. There is a consensus that mitigation implementation is ideal in the preparedness stage, and should be kept at the forefront so opportunities to encourage and promote its implementation throughout recovery are not overlooked.

Participants are clear in their feelings that not enough emphasis is placed on the value of pre- and post-disaster recovery planning. Participants feel more emphasis is needed and planning and preparedness efforts facilitate and significantly shorten recovery periods. Embedded throughout



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are their comments on planning principles and action steps necessary for the completion of successful planning efforts. For example, participants note the need to:

Set recovery goals. Define a new future. Establish timelines.
Conduct assessments. And more.

Participants call for “non-stop” planning and note that plans should incorporate mitigation and other risk reduction strategies. They believe preparedness and recovery planning can lessen negative outcomes from a disaster and identify two (2) types of planning needed: Recovery planning and implementation planning. Participants want recovery planning and preparedness efforts to occur pre-disaster; caution that plans should “not sit on the shelf,” think local planning efforts should be supported with appropriate and adequate funding and look to Federal participation in those costs.

For plans to be maximally successful, participants feel planning efforts must be inclusive. They look for the involvement of Federal, State, Tribal and local authorities as well as nonprofits, the private sector, other NGOs, recovery stakeholders and citizens. They feel it is important that underserved and special-needs populations are included at the planning and decision-making table and encourage outreach to these groups.

Recovery Measurement + Recovery Phases

Participants look to the identification of pre-disaster conditions as a benchmark against which post-disaster recovery can be measured. Significant attention is given to milestones and phases of recovery, and determining at what phase in the recovery continuum success is declared. Participants want to see “reasonable” timelines established against which to measure recovery progress.

There is considerable discussion among participants about how to determine when recovery is complete. Some participants define a successful recovery as the point where the community is returned to self-sufficiency. Other participants name success identifiers as “restoring community optimism and confidence.” Participants agree that successful recovery, in part, is achieved when basic services are back in place, infrastructure is restored, aid to individuals is in place, the economy rebounds, basic human services such as fire, police and medical services are re-



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established and community restoration begins. Other groups consider a recovery successful when the community is restored to near or at pre-disaster levels, risks are mitigated, residents are transitioned from temporary to permanent housing and the community is prepared and has planned for the next event. And some participants believe successful recoveries must achieve *better* than pre-disaster conditions, incorporating mitigation techniques and building to newer and higher standards. Important milestones include the setting of deadlines for disaster assistance, the completion of assessments, a successful housing mission is identified and Individual Assistance/ Public Assistance distribution of aid is occurring.

Significant milestones can also signal a transition to another phase of recovery. For example, the completion of assessments signals that a different kind of recovery work can begin. Or, community members look for responders to be leaving the community and the continued mobilization of faith-based community organizations to continue recovery as signals that a new phase in recovery is beginning.

Most agree that the recovery process generally includes four (4) phases: Pre-disaster, Response, Short- and Long-term Recovery and the line between short- and long-term recovery is not a hard line. In fact, participants note that recovery actions will proceed simultaneously with response initiatives.

Recovery Leadership

Participants feel recovery is dependent on leadership from the local, Tribal, State and Federal levels. They believe leadership must be visible and active in encouraging recovery efforts. While they are clear that recovery rests on the shoulders of local authorities and citizens, other levels of authorities must encourage recovery, assist in identifying resources, promote mitigation and help with the coordination of transitions, including the demobilization of aid as recovery moves forward.

The groups note that leadership at all levels must work together to create a network of aid that creates relationships, seeks out partners, tracks progress and reports progress to all participants in recovery and those affected by the disaster in a clear and “non-agenda-driven” manner.



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Participants think FEMA visibility should be high in the community and look to recovery leadership to review the *Stafford Act* and other laws and regulations to determine how authorities can better support the longer-term needs of recovery, improving the speed and quality of recovery assistance.

INNOVATIVE IDEAS

Several participants offer a perspective on issues others do not touch upon and that represent new or at least not universally held perspectives on recovery. They include:

- One participant suggests going beyond tabletop exercises to utilize real-time exercises for recovery.
- Another promotes attention to psychological and spiritual needs of victims and one person calls for the needs of the dead to be considered equally with the living.
- A suggestion was made to involve local media in disseminating information to different languages/cultures and use the media as a “vector” to distribute need information.
- One person suggests recovery progress reporting be consolidated into a single report process suitable for distribution through the chain of command, across stakeholder groups using existing channels and to the public.
- One participant suggests using alternative media that offer instant messaging and facilitate pushing a lot of information to large numbers of people (similarly to techniques used in the last presidential campaign).
- Another advocates for the creation of pre-disaster emergency funds so that immediate funds are available to assist communities in addressing immediate cash flow needs.



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Participant Responses

(NOTE: Comments are recorded by question by group so it is clear which groups responded to which questions.)

Q1. (Original Q1) How would you define a successful disaster recovery?

Group I - 1

- Successful recovery emphasizes effective communications strategies.
 - Communications strategies support public meetings.
 - Review of lessons learned informs future recovery efforts.
- When compared to pre-disaster conditions, these are benchmarks by which recovery success can be measured:
 - People are in permanent housing.
 - The local economy has been stabilized and restored to pre-disaster levels.
 - School enrollment numbers have rebounded.
 - Tax base has recovered.
 - Real estate pricing has stabilized.
- "Sense of community" has returned to residents.
- The community is returned to pre-disaster conditions or better.
- Risks are reduced through mitigation planning.
- Recovery focus should not be limited to a geographic area.
 - People who are affected and/or displaced need to be considered and their circumstances assessed.
- The question is whether to return the community to conditions EXACTLY as before the disaster or to return to similar quality of life.
- Loss of life has been minimized.
- Government services are once again operational including police, fire and medical services.

Group II - 1

- No significant loss of leaders of faith community signals success.
- Community has been made as close to whole as possible.
 - Pre-disaster condition is achieved.
- Successful housing mission has been identified.
 - Governments and private sector are involved.
 - It should be noted that an adequate mission drives recovery.
- Government services are operation again
- Economy is back to pre-disaster levels.
 - Unemployment rates are stabilized.
 - Other indicators signal recovery.
- Response effort is immediate.
- Community is actively involved in the recovery process.
- Bureaucratic barriers to receiving assistance are reduced.



- Community has clear understanding of types of aid available.
- Diversity: All sectors of society involved in response so they feel their voices are heard.
- Everyone understands this is not just a bricks and mortar process.
 - Psychological and spiritual recovery needs attention.
- Smooth, efficient transitioning between phases of recovery with PNP, local and Federal governments is established.
- Everyone is offered an opportunity to provide input in a unified fashion.
- Effective case management is in place.
- Needs of the dead being equally taken into account as those of the living.
 - Family services are being addressed.
 - Issues need to be addressed in planning.

Group III - 1

- Government services are again functioning.
- Stabilized infrastructure is in place.
- Those impacted understand and respect the recovery process.
 - There is more positive energy than negative in the community.
- Issues are addressed when agencies do not mesh.
- Planning and preparation are in place for next event.
- Plan is in place to sustain energy efforts.
 - A clear process relying on lessons learned/feedback is set.
- Those affected are made as whole as possible.
- Post-disaster recovery loss of life and property minimization is a priority for social services.
- Progress in light of defined goals is achieved.
- Successful outreach to disadvantaged populations (including health and human services) is established.

Group IV - 1

- Social issues are addressed.
- Economic issues are addressed.
- Psychological issues are addressed.
- A “normalcy” baseline is established.
- Tracking by issue area is in place.
- It is back to business as usual for community.
- It might not be a full return to pre-disaster levels but rather a return to self-sufficiency.
- Recovery is coordinated between community sectors.
 - Seamless process is in place as viewed by those affected.
- Clear and efficient access to resources is available.
- State of community at return means people affected are more aware of available services.
 - Knowledge of the system is in place.
- Systemic challenges in delivering human services to those in need are overcome.
- Community is not “top heavy” with major agency involvement.
 - Recovery services begin to “trickle down” to community level during the early stages of recovery.
 - Corporations and employers are engaged as partners.



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- Intensive case management and services are delivered to disadvantaged segments of the population that the entitlement process may not have reached.
- Private sector funding is leveraged.
- Resiliency is established.

Group V - 1

- Plans for recovery are operational within 14 days after disaster.
- These issues have returned to a normal, pre-disaster condition:
 - Jobs.
 - Homes.
 - Infrastructure.
 - Income streams.
- It will look different, but has similar living conditions.
- Opportunities to improve conditions and quality of life through recovery process are investigated.
- Timeframe and process must be acceptable to re-establish:
 - Services.
 - Infrastructure.
- Recovery has a vision of mitigation.
- Pre-event conditions are established as a benchmark:
 - Size and type of event will determine what recovery goals look like, not necessarily the pre-disaster recovery condition.
 - Type/trajectory community is headed (declining/thriving) is considered.
- Recovery success is also measured in how well the most vulnerable populations are doing. *Are they as well off as the general population?* (also to A4).
- Geography will and does affect outcomes.
- Central lifelines and services are restored in a reasonable timeframe.
- Recovery reflects, respects and leverages the values of community.
- Challenges of disadvantaged populations are addressed through community-specific measures established to aid vulnerable populations.

Group VI - 1

- Critical business functions are recovered to support clients.
- How soon the community can return to a pre-disaster state is determined.
- Relocated communities could have different paths to success.
- People are looking forward rather than looking backward.
- Safety, security, housing, jobs, schools and employment are back to pre-disaster levels.
- Plan based on pre-defined scenarios are executed:
 - Crisis-type specific scenarios work best.
- When the community cannot return to pre-disaster stage, prepare them to adapt to a realistic future.
- Goals are identified and established prior to disaster by involving stakeholders.
- Community can understand problems and implement solutions in a timely manner.
- Lessons learned from past events are reviewed.



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Q2. (Original Q2) Are there clear phases in the disaster recovery process that are useful milestones?

Group I - 2

- Phases of a disaster are:
 - Pre-disaster preparedness.
 - Response.
 - Long-term recovery.

PHASES

Pre-disaster Preparedness	Response	Long-term Recovery
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- Milestones include:
 - Re-opening of schools in the community.
 - Streetlights and transportation systems are once again functional.
 - Basic utilities and infrastructure are restored.
 - Responders have left the area.
 - Faith-based community organizations are mobilized to continue response is ongoing.
 - Accurate/comprehensive damage/needs assessments, including assessing the economy, are complete.
 - Steps have been taken to restore community optimism and confidence.
 - The level of support (money and services) that State and Federal governments will provide has been determined.
 - Levels of support should be based on expectations identified before and during damage assessments.
 - Community self-identification of needs and expectations is complete.
 - This feeds dialogue with aid agencies.
 - Explore opportunities for community needs assessments before disaster recover to identify issues and needs likely to arise as a result of disaster.
- Expectations are managed early during recovery planning.
 - Community outreach and education are used to determine recovery actions.
 - Alternative media should be used for communicating (as was used in the past Presidential election).

Group II - 2

- Recovery is progressing when meeting housing needs are transitioning from shelters to temporary housing; then from temporary to permanent housing.
 - Housing transition process is treated as a continuum.
 - A significant number of people are returning to community.
- Infrastructure and services are in place and functional, to support citizen return to community.
- Individuals receive aid.
- There is a transition in the community from addressing loss (direct impacts) to a more forward-looking approach.
- Response, restoration, repair and completion are phases.



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PHASES

Response	Restoration	Repair	Completion
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- Recovery plan is established pre-event.
- Expectations are managed from the outset.
- Diverse stakeholders are involved early on — Recovery planning and decision-making is inclusive.
 - Disabled, mentally ill, elderly, children and those under financial hardship are included.
- Recovery is successful at the point which local ability to recover and function individually is achieved.

Group III - 2

- Stages and dates for recovery are established.
 - In the first 90 days the stages include: Initial mission implementation activities, key decisions, the saving and securing of life and property and identification of projects for current and long-term recovery.
 - Implementation takes place from 90 to 180 days.
- Milestones for individuals (family, business) are different than community as whole, but are just as important.
- Agency recovery planning should occur during the week following the disaster event, taking into account all stakeholder expectations.
- Power is restored.
- Food is available with reliable supply lines.
- Housing is being repaired.
- Soloed execution of plans creates mistrust of government.
- Assessment of effectiveness of aid programs is complete.
 - Data has been collected.

Group IV - 2

- Pre-disaster recovery plan preparation and testing takes place.
- Disaster recovery assistance deadlines are established.
- Some disaster recovery programs are ending; others are beginning.
- There is evidence of community acceptance that aid can help and the successful enrollment process of people applying for programs signal success.
- Budget, needs and decision support (methodologies) are identified early on lead to success.
- Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) model.

Group V - 2

- Saving lives and property are completed in first 90 days. A second parallel start of recovery plans launch in 90-day cycle and identify Federal funding sources and availability.
- Small businesses cannot wait 90 days; they have unique concerns that must be addressed early on.
 - Beyond critical infrastructure, focus is on local businesses, schools and hospitals.
 - Personnel intensive initiatives are undertaken.
- All action proceeds simultaneously with response.



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Group VI - 2

- Ability to communicate inbound and outbound is established.
- In measuring the economy, the community has returned to tax base similar to pre-disaster.
- Human element —*Angry Earth*.
 - Socioeconomic conditions.
- Awareness of the physical presence of the recovery team by the public is raised.
- Community members are engaged in the recovery process.
- Critical infrastructure operations are addressed.
- Assessment phase is completed — an understanding of business needs and communication of those issues back to the community is complete.
- Housing is addressed. The community has the ability to close shelters and move displaced persons to temporary housing.
- IA/PA is distributing benefits of aid to communities.
 - Finite decision points are achieved.



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Q3. (Original Q3) What features of Federal disaster recovery assistance are most important to you?

Group I - 3

- Communication is established.
- Roles and responsibilities of participants are clarified:
 - Agency self-assessment of effectiveness is conducted.
- Community is maintained by making it inclusive and interactive.
- Mitigation steps are taken pre-disaster to reduce risk.
- Small Business Administration (SBA) programs are in place to allow immediate access to funds.
 - Financial resiliency is achieved.

Group II - 3

- FEMA mortgage and rental assistance is available.
- Functional chain of command for spiritual services are established.
- All available Federal resources are used.
- In communal areas, a clear chain of command is established.
- Documentation requirements for those needing aid are reduced.
- Resources for small business recovery are established.
- Timely declaration of disaster is issued:
 - Assistance with the ground coordination with State and Federal resources is provided.
- Crisis counseling program is established with enhancements to include treatment for all affected parties and caregivers.
- Education plan is created for the public about processes and programs.
- Funding is available for family assistance and case management.
- The issue of environmental sustainability is taken into consideration.

Group III - 3

- Immediate response begins after disaster.
- Security for the community is re-established.
- Housing is available to those affected.
- Health services are up and running.
- Insurance.
- Emergency funds are in place pre-disaster.
- Surge capability. The Federal government has the ability to bring in a lot of “boots on the ground” in terms of manpower, experienced recovery professionals, subject-matter experts and others to assist with recovery.
- Case management support to help coordinate recovery assistance for individuals.
- Stakeholder assessments and “efforts like this.” Federal resources have the ability to convene groups of stakeholders to address recovery and other issues.
- Lessons learned are reviewed.
- Communication. The Federal government has the ability to bring in communications professionals as well as provide quality and quantitative information on needed recovery



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programs and assets, how to apply for them, results of community damage assessments and other data needed to facilitate community recovery.

- Implementation plan is created to go with recovery plan:
 - Do not let plans sit on a shelf.

Group IV - 3

- Community education is planned on the long-term effects of disaster recovery:
 - Surrounding community receives indirect benefits.
- Federal disaster recovery case management is assessed.
- Experts are brought in to support Private Nonprofit (PNP) missions:
- Mortgage and rental assistance are reinstated.
- To serve a diverse community, outreach needs to cater to different languages and cultures; local media can be used as a vector to disseminate information.

Group V - 3

- Partnerships with State and local governments involve on-the-ground assessments via “terrain walk” by recovery planners.
- FEMA visibility should be high in the community.
 - Responders need to do a better job of addressing needs.
 - Valuing/fostering of communications is improved.
- A “face” is given to government, but if answers to IA/PA issues are not known, it may do more damage than good.
 - Passing on misinformation is reduced.
- Inaccurate obligation decisions are corrected.
- Consistency in carrying out Federal decisions is established.
- There is no “Monday Morning Quarterbacking” of Federal decisions.
- Clear, reliable lines of communication are established.
- For States in a position to run programs with minimal FEMA oversight, let them do it without second-guessing funding obligations.

Group VI - 3

- Interaction between FEMA and community is established.
- Integration of local/State aid resources is complete:
 - Coordination and communication of the requirements for qualification to community resources is being addressed.
- Timely, quick and accurate assistance is provided.
- *Stafford Act* needs to be reviewed.
- Decisions at local level determine the level of relationship with FEMA:
 - Level of trust between governing agencies is considered.
- *Stafford Act* needs to be revised to include pandemics and assistance with transitional housing.



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Q4. (Original Q4) How would you measure progress and what specific metrics should be considered for a successful disaster recovery?

Group I - 4

- The condition of recovery for displaced persons is addressed.
- Fiscally solvent municipality is in place.
- Metrics need to account for changes to demographic.
- Provisions are in place for people who lost everything.
- Community is not re-established, but instead:
 - What is success in terms for Federal and local government money?
 - Is this a social justice question?
- Touchy political questions need to be addressed.
- Self-sufficient operations of utilities and infrastructure are established.
- Preservation of culture, personality and character of community are accomplished.
- Different metrics are used for different phases of recovery.
- Timing of the government response's departure is a measure.
 - Things return to life as usual.

Group II - 4

- Level of secondary Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in faith leadership communities is not significantly higher than average communities.
- How quickly can we restore community to pre-disaster conditions?
 - Human resources issues need to be addressed (agency/PNP/etc.).
 - Financial resources are in place.
 - Families have been reunited.
 - Cost to government to provide services returns to pre-disaster levels.
 - Demobilization of layers of aid is taking place
 - Reopening of local businesses is a metric.
 - A unified effort, non-agenda-driven, is best for the community as a whole.
 - Health and education have returned to service.
 - There are different metrics for different disaster recovery types:
 - Loss of life versus property is an example.

Group III - 4

- Input from those affected is essential.
- Lessons learned need to be reviewed and implemented in subsequent disasters.
- Confidence level versus level of satisfaction is measured.
- Individual, family, and businesses milestones within a disaster and across disasters are tracked:
 - They will differ between the types of disasters.
- Eliminate arbitrary valuation; perception of; indicator prioritization of which lives are saved.
- Formal mechanism to utilize feedback in a DR recovery process is developed.

Group IV - 4



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- Damage assessment completion is a measure.
- Impact from the risk is a measure.
- State of pre- versus post-event economics can be used as a metric.
- Morale and reputation of the community is rebuilt.
- Assessing impacts and risks to first responders is a measure.
- Look at specific human services:
 - Tracking of case management statistics.

Group V - 4

- Clearly defined and established goals should be used as measures:
 - Initiation of IA/PA is a milestone.
 - Goals should be event specific.
 - Timelines when Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) open is defined.
- Number of businesses open and timing after event, including financial institutions is a measure.
 - Local services re-established is measureable.
- Infrastructure is operating at levels to enable businesses large and small to operate.
 - Tracking for all levels is in one (1) report, which is then distributed at all, levels.
- Conditions are examined and reports submitted six (6) months and/or 12 months after event.
 - Individuals are preparing for next event.
 - Changes in individual disaster planning behavior are assessed.



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Q5. (Original Q16) What else would you like us to know?

Group I - 5

- Damage assessment determinations need to be agreed upon by all different levels of government involved in recovery.
 - Accuracy is important!

Group II - 5

- Time limits and administrative timelines are determined; short-term recovery needs to be defined better, but not six (6) months!
- What resources are needed and/or available to make long-term recovery possible are identified.
 - It cannot be an isolated process.
- There are different definitions for long-term recovery versus short-term recovery.
- Non-stop planning should be undertaken. Examples include:
 - City stakeholders (repair, respond, recover).
 - human services
- Planning should include funding for preparedness.
- Plan exercises to simulate recovery.
 - What training looks like is determined.
 - Current emphasis is being placed only on response.
 - Recovery planning funding should be available at all levels.



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BEST PRACTICES



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Best Practices

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Participants in the Stakeholders Forum held in the state shared opinions and thoughts regarding what best practices lead to a successful recovery. They recognize the importance of financial hardships brought by disaster and have suggestions on how they should be addressed proactively. They offer best practice suggestions on how to make recovery an all-inclusive event involving all stakeholders and partners. And, they note successful communications and its importance across the recovery continuum as another key area of focus.

There is a great deal of interest in identifying resources and building networks for resource delivery pre-disaster. Participants place a lot of attention on pre-planning and how it helps recovery react quicker and more effectively. They also spent considerable time discussing challenges like managing public expectations, education for the public, and training of volunteers and the importance of adequate aid to special-needs populations.

EMERGING THEMES

The following major themes emerged on how the Stakeholders Forum participants identify best practices in a recovery.

- **Recovery Management**
- **Financial Considerations**
- **Disaster Pre-Planning**
- **Resources Identification + Networking**
- **Communication + Inclusiveness**
- **Lessons Learned**

Recovery Management



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Recoveries need to be organized and throughout the Stakeholder Forum, participants identified key steps important to recovery success. Rolled up together, it is a tall order. Recovery has to embrace collaboration and inclusiveness, and challenge barriers that make it difficult to access resources, seek efficiencies and more. Recovery tasks go beyond post-event activities to include pre-event preparations. Oversight is needed to ensure:

- Roles and responsibilities are defined and understood.
- Pre- and post-event planning is done.
- Strategic partnership development occurs.
- Recovery goals are identified.
- Regulatory authorities are engaged.
- The process is inclusive.
- Training is available where needed.
- Stakeholders are identified and engaged.
- Relationships are developed.
- Public education and outreach are done as needed.
- Strong communications strategies are in place to develop and support needed connectivity among and between partners, authorities, stakeholders, resource providers and citizens.
- Appropriate skill sets, subject-matter experts and credentialed resources are on the ground and available.
- Assets are identified, managed and available to the community when and where needed.
- Supply and value chains are established.
- Resources are leveraged.
- And more.

Participants note that recovery leadership needs to recognize interdependencies, understand connections and acknowledge the critical role of communications and coordination. Funding to support each of these activities needs to be secured. Participants note the role the private sector can play and say that more collaboration is needed between corporate, nonprofits and governing authorities to make recovery management a success.

Recovery goals participants want to see include strategies that address all segments of the community, revitalize the local economy, establish economic and environmental stability, address



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the needs of small businesses, focus on resiliency and mitigation, address housing needs and incorporate a holistic approach to recovery.

Financial Considerations

A key point participants make is that while financial challenges are present both pre-disaster and during recovery, the availability of funding needs to “speed up” during recovery.. There is consensus that the “money flow” takes too long and funding disbursements need to be accelerated with fewer “strings attached.” Participants think the ideal situation is to establish interim or pre-event funding and have it in place for use in emergencies. Participants suggest finding new and innovative ways to leverage funding from new sources. Attention is paid to pre-disaster funding for educational and pre-planning purposes.

Other funding considerations include specific funds to the faith-based community for outreach purposes and funding for nonprofits and NGOs for the short- and long-term recovery assistance. Also discussed are ways to accelerate dispensing of funds to those in need by involving banking and insurance partners in the recovery process and providing financial incentives for recovery efforts. Participants say it is important that recovery funding is in line with expectations.

Disaster Pre-Planning

The Stakeholders Forum participants challenge recovery planning to begin pre-event. Over and over in responding to each of the 16 questions, participants used pre-planning, pre-disaster, pre-event, readiness and preparedness to signal their belief in the value and benefits of pre-event recovery planning. They feel more emphasis should be placed on planning and preparedness and the financial considerations needed to enable pre- and post-event planning to be successful. Participants feel investing in pre-planning activities will pay dividends in lower overall recovery costs. Pre-planning activities discussed range from establishing resource delivery networks, building sustainable models of community-based coordination, planning for housing evacuees, establishing communication models for local governments, taking advantage of training programs to pre-train responders, developing pre-disaster checklists of response needs, pre-planning with



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regulatory agencies for environmental permitting and personalizing planning to the individual level.

Additionally participants want to see recovery leadership seek out mitigation opportunities and include them in recovery initiatives. Planning, both pre- and post-event, needs to ensure local “voices are heard” by including the diversity of recovery stakeholders and resource providers in addition to those who represent local and State governments.

Resource Identification + Networking

A recurring theme at the forum is the need to identify resources before an event and develop a network for delivery after the event. Identifying resources and establishing pre-disaster relationships with those with resources saves valuable time once a disaster has hit. Emphasis is placed on growing the relationship between corporate entities, nonprofits and government. Part of the process includes assessing the readiness of all three (3) and stressing the importance of maintaining capability. There was discussion of Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and other volunteer agencies and how they should be integrated into the response and recovery system to ensure identification of the needs of diverse populations and that all populations have an “equal voice.”

Grassroots outreach methods need to be established to bring preparedness and recovery education to the local level and instill accountability. Participants also urge building relationships between Federal partners before the event, clarifying roles and responsibilities and strengthening relationships between State and Federal partners.

Communication + Inclusiveness

Participants feel it important to develop and open communications lines horizontally and vertically across all levels of recovery effort. They emphasize using open communication at the local level to open “two- (2-) way street” communication lines. Several urge the use of *charrettes* as a way to move those affected from an emotional stance to one of concrete realities. Communication is key to gathering buy-in from diverse populations. Participants want messaging to go beyond “announcements” to instead be ongoing dialogue, helping to provide needed information while also helping to manage expectations. Strategies need to include information sharing across jurisdictions



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and program areas, appeal to diverse audiences and increase awareness of the availability of recovery resources and the requirements that must be met to access them.

The groups discussed the use of emerging technologies to send text messages to mass audiences and using social networking Web sites to communicate recovery efforts. Inclusiveness must be utilized to reach as many as people as possible to communicate recovery messages in the most effective possible fashion, resulting in increased public trust in the process.

Lessons Learned

State participants think evaluating past experiences and learning from what worked and what did not helps identify a clear path forward for future actions. Again, when responding to almost every question, the value of identifying and institutionalizing lessons learned is important to participants.

INNOVATIVE IDEAS

Some of the new innovative ideas and suggestions garnered from the Stakeholders Forum include:

- Use after action reports to synthesize results into other efforts
- Use emerging technology to:
 - Share information. For example, making better use of 211 call technologies.
 - Use Web-based and new media technologies to reach out to recovery target audiences.
 - Explore new technologies for best practices development.
- Create lines of credit to ensure businesses and individuals have ready cash immediately after a disaster so that recovery efforts can begin.
- Create waivers for low-income housing tax requirements (using post-Katrina as a model).
- Develop undergraduate and community college level recovery-focused curriculums.



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- Continue and expand Emergency Support Function (ESF) #14 Long-term Community Recovery functions.
- Emulate a particular state's hazard mitigation program that uses funding to mitigate recent threats.
- Educate responders on environmental impacts.
- Identify potential environmental impacts pre-disaster.
- Increase readiness and expedite recovery by creating pre-disaster education and checklists of what is needed post-event.
- Develop a period for review of program requirements to ensure they continue to match needs and making changes to requirements when they do not.
- Utilize the American Red Cross (ARC) sub-grant process that occurred after 9/11 that allowed prime grantees to sub-grant to smaller NGOs, facilitating access to needed funds to support recovery efforts.
- Have key day-to-day personnel remain consistent throughout recovery.
- Use Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs to train citizens to support first responders.
- Establish a credentialing period for PNP to operate.
- Establish check cashing services and disaster credit services through financial institutions and credit unions in affected areas to facilitate access to cash.
- Provide incentives to businesses, individuals and local governments for recovery planning, debris recycling, to encourage best practices in sustainable rebuilding techniques, business preparedness planning, building community resilience and other areas that benefit overall community sustainability and need financial support. Pair incentives with communications and utilization of best practices.
- Personalize planning to individuals.
- Fund support for caregivers.
- Fund and cross-train for long-term mental health.



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- Create a national risk communications plan. Have local governments “advertise” the need for preparation. Establish a Federal message of planning and preparation that focuses on recovery.
- Recognize that community recovery is dependent upon individuals.

Participant Responses

[NOTE: Comments are recorded by question by group so it is clear which groups responded to which questions.]

Q1. (Original Q5) What are best practices in managing recovery from disasters?

PM Group I - 1

- Economic and environmental sustainability are established.
- Understanding of supply and value chains of organizations is determined.
 - What kind of partnership exists between public and private entities?
- Identifying resources and establishing relationships with those who have resources pre-event will save time.
- Currently compartmentalized by sector but there are connections.
 - There is a need to better understand connections and interdependencies between agencies.
 - More collaboration is necessary between corporate, nonprofits and government.

PM Group II - 1

- Pre-planning is one of the most important best practices.
- Resources are identified before disaster recovery.
- Sustainable models of community-based coordination within sectors (social services, environment, etc.) are established.
 - Models need to be sustained beyond recovery process.
- Networks should be established pre-event (e.g. faith-based), but there is no money to support preparedness initiatives.
 - Readiness of nonprofit organizations is assessed and the importance of maintaining capability is stressed.
 - There needs to be communication of interest and practice.
- Partnerships with emergent networks of communities of interest and communications practice/networks are established.
- Funding in line with expectations is assured.
- After action reports are reviewed to see how communities recovered and to look for ways to synthesize lessons learned into other efforts.
 - You can learning from what worked best in other places.



- Capitalize on lessons learned from other events.
- Technology is used to share information (e.g. 211, databases, etc.).

Group III - 1

- The *National Response Plan* is followed.
- Programs must have flexibility to adapt — particularly with eligibility.
 - Programs are tailored to meet need.
 - There is flexibility with documentation requirements.
- Outreach plan is established to under-represented communities (language and cultural appropriates).
- Period of re-evaluation of program requirements is developed to ensure they match needs.
- Decision making should be with local offices.
- Local voices are included in the recovery process.
- The approach to unmet needs is individualized.
- Communication is only valued when it is used at the local level — it is a two- (2-) way street.
- The enterprise will learn with every disaster.
- There is flexibility to evolve and be responsive.
- Communication of program requirements to the community is improved.
- Tendency to “transmit” communication is reduced; there needs to be dialogue, not just announcements.
 - Ways of improving how we answer questions are explored.
 - Public Information Officers (PIOs) are used to answer questions.
- New technology for best practice developments is explored.
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for all involved in recovery.

Group IV - 1

- Government is integrated with volunteer agencies.
- Diversity needs are identified prior to disaster.
- Spiritual leaders are integrated into planning process.
- National VOAD has spiritual core as best practice.
- Mental health aid is integrated into recovery process.
- Pre-disaster recovery plans are established.
- Public expectations are managed.
- Training and education of process and regulations are offered.
- Recovery goals are identified.
- Jurisdictions are allowed to share information.
- Strategies are communicated in public.
- Early convening of impacted community is facilitated.
- Preparedness is made a recovery priority.
- Expert information is available early in process.

Group V - 1

- ARC sub-grant process that occurred after 9/11 allows prime grantees to then sub-grant to smaller NGOs since the process was flexible/monitored among NGOs.
- POCs among agencies are established to shorten time frame — pre- and post-disaster.
- Coordination and communication are critical.



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- The private sector is engaged in pre-event planning process and post-event decision making.



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Q2. (Original Q8) What are best practices for community recovery planning that incorporates public input?

Group I - 2

- Often public input, forums and processes do not result in meaningful recovery mechanisms.
 - Whole model needs to be looked at.
- Public input is an important release for people.
- Public process also includes private sector, which is an important part of the process.
- Listening and compromising on results is important to make it a meaningful process.
 - There is follow-through on expectations.
- Interim funding is in place that can be used for emergencies.
 - Some private sector funding commitments are available for post-event needs.
- Ways are found to get pre-event funding in place (i.e. line of credit).
 - Reimbursability is ensured.
- Funding is leveraged.
- Mitigation opportunities are reviewed.
 - Projects are pre-identified.
 - One particular state's hazard mitigation program funds that are used to mitigate recent threats are emulated.
 - Mitigation is funded, not other funding groups.

Group II - 2

- Where to place those impacted by events is determined — pre-planning.
- The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) model for low-income housing tax requirements post-Katrina is a good example; it waived some eligibility requirements.
- People are moved from temporary housing to permanent housing.
- Charrettes are used; move from the emotional to the concrete.
- Participants develop trust in the recovery process.
 - Continuity of the process is critical.
- Multiple efforts of outside agencies are dovetailed.
- Key day-to-day staff remaining consistent increases the ability to communicate with diverse constituents.
- "Sustainability" is defined
 - Whose sustainability? How do we accommodate for changes in post-disaster markets?
 - State enforcement is important in combating price gauging.
 - Early communication with regulatory bodies is established (reach out); use pre-planning for emergency permitting.
- Focus should be on resiliency and mitigation:
 - Organizations that "watch over" the recovery process that are supported by multiple groups are established.
 - Recovery is looked at as a continuum.
 - Not all communities have sufficient resources.
 - A holistic view is taken with mechanisms in place to customize/adapt.



Group III - 2

- Public forums are used to gather input.
- Communications is a critical need — what are the best practices?
- How do we revitalize the local economy quickly?
 - A moratorium is placed on new regulations; guidance is provided on existing regulations.
- How do we make decisions/priority?
- Training for recovery planning is implemented.
- Pre-event planning is established.
- Public forums are conducted to help establish “what the need is.”
- It is important to ensure communication trickles down to local level.
- Representative groups are used when numbers are overwhelming.
 - Sometimes it is not feasible to reach individuals.
- Methods for reaching out to people in non-event situations are established.
 - This is a challenge.
- Employees can be used to communicate the need to pre-plan, educate and motivate.
- Recovery is made part of the business continuity plan.
- The CERT program is utilized.
- Resources are available for businesses to educate and assist their employees.
 - Smaller businesses are the most vulnerable.
- Chambers of commerce are used to work with small businesses. Also, you should:
 - Use social organizations
 - Establish roles and single points of contact.
 - Use Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning to mitigate losses.
 - Use films, presentations, etc., from FEMA to educate.

Group IV - 2

- Charrettes can be utilized for recovery and to educate on participation in recovery.

Group V - 2

- Attention should be paid to diversity and need for inclusiveness in public.
- Partnerships of equal voices need to be built.
- Engage and convene diverse groups to deal with cultural issues.
- Faith-based community should be built into the plan.
- Communication is used to establish buy-in with diverse populations.
- Diverse communities need to be connected and integrated in.
- Special-needs populations like the elderly and disabled need to be included.
- Educate and train on what is expected.
- Knowledge and understanding of the rules (Community Block Grants (CBG) PG – 101) is needed.

Group VI - 2

- CERT programs should be taken advantage of — have citizens trained to support first responders.
- Town Hall meetings should be held.
- FEMA opens up VOAD to new community groups and mentor through process.



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- You need to ensure that PNP are included throughout recovery effort.
- PNPs are educated on access to post-event resources.



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Q3. (Original Q10) As disaster recovery is primarily a State and local leadership issue, what are best practices for the timing (including start and end) and form of Federal assistance and coordination?

Group I - 3

- Pre-disaster planning activities (focused on recovery) should be held.
- People should be brought in prior to the event.
 - You should establish two-way street information method.
- The desire of NGOs/nonprofits is there, but funding is not.
 - What role can Federal government play?
- Funding to education in some situations is increased.
- Undergraduate/community college level education programs can be offered.

Group II - 3

- Roles and responsibilities that could be distributed through existing, local organizations are clearly identified.
- The media should be brought into discussion.
- Technology is used to get messages out:
 - Mass text messaging can be used.
 - Some cell phone providers may have technology to help.
- If you send message of self-reliance/self-sufficiency you create movement to change mindsets and attitudes.
- Bringing preparedness/recovery education and messaging down to the local level (hardware stores, fairs, schools, etc.) helps instill accountability.
- Expectations are managed.
- Focus is on mitigation and resilience.
- Where does planning start (at what level — local, county, State, Federal government)?
 - The political process impacts what happens.
- Response activities often outpace recovery process necessitating pre-planning.
 - Mitigation is integrated early on.

Group III - 3

- Joint Field Office (JFO) should be established ASAP to allow for immediate response.
- Refer language to people impacted by disaster — empower people.
- You need to recognize that localities will bypass State to achieve recovery, if necessary.
- The political process is understood.
- A better understanding of process by public is established.
- Timeliness of disaster resource process is implemented.
- All of the Federal family is included.
- We need to continue and expand ESF #14 functions.
- A longer term for JFO needs to be established, or replaced with another entity in Long-Term Recovery (LTR) (extend for appropriate length to meet requirements).
- Deadlines and the process for extending deadlines is understood.
 - Community expectations are managed from the beginning.



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- Unrealistic deadlines for PA program should not be set without State and local input.

Group IV - 3

- Relationships are built with Federal partners before the event.
- Early funding sources (ex. H1N1 Planning funds dispersed early) are established.
- Roles and responsibilities of Federal government are clarified.
- Specific funding is given to faith-based community to do outreach to their community.
- Plan is needed for transition from Federal/State to nonprofit.
- Nonprofits need to be funded for the short- and long-term recovery process.
- Timely responses to requests need to be given.
- Mental health first line is supported.
- A credentialing system needs to be established for PNP to operate

Group V - 3

- A transparent and consistent presidential declaration process across United States is needed.



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Q4. (Original Q12) What are best practices for marshaling Federal assistance-both financial and professional support-to support State and local efforts to recover from a disaster, and how can we work together to better leverage existing Federal grant dollars?

Group I - 4

- Money flow to applicants takes too long.
- Disbursement of funds needs to be accelerated (less strings attached/more FEMA support).
- Better coordination on PA between Federal government and States is ensured.
- Applicants are educated on PA program, which provides more credible/trained FEMA staff.
- As part of the process, we should look across Federal Forms and infer requirements to find ways to be more consistent on information for requests.
- Expectations are managed on when funds are committed versus obligated.

Group II - 4

- 406 Mitigation money is used.
- Volunteer Agency Liaisons (VALs) are used to be proactive post-event.
- Resource availability of and deadlines for resources are communicated to communities.
- Pilot program for a radio station has been established.
- Alternative fuel source are supported and funded.
- Leadership is educated, communicated with and trained.
 - Communications is a two- (2-) way Federal, State and local process, across recovery stakeholder groups, recovery partners and resource providers. \leftrightarrow PNP.
- Partnerships with the private sector are developed.
- Support is lent to faith-based group for duration of recovery, especially vulnerable populations.
- Government should recruit professional/knowledge-based specialists to work with communities (i.e., certified chaplains and credentialed pastoral counselors).

Group III - 4

- A best practice or better is system established to bring financial resources to community base and grassroots, or to prepare for and respond to disasters.
- A non-burdensome process is created for accessing Federal and State resources.
- Access to resources is increased by mid- and small-size PNP.



Q5. (Original Q14) What are best practices for integrating economic and environmental sustainability into recovery?

Group I - 5

- Pre-disaster education/checklists of what is needed post-event relative to obtaining assistance are developed.
- Educate/recognize environmental implications that need to be considered post-disaster.
 - Educate/recognize environmental impacts pre-disaster to prevent damage post-disaster.
- Risks and opportunities post-disaster are recognized.
- Mitigation in post-disaster/window of opportunity to add to community resiliency are applied.
- A surge capability is in place for environmental impacts.

Group II - 5

- Buy in from financial (banking and insurance)/environmental/code communities in recovery (partners for recovery) is obtained.
- Responders are educated on environmental impact from response through recovery.
- Pre-planning with regulatory agencies for environmental permitting takes place.
- Differences between short- and long-term recovery are defined through inclusive planning process.
 - Goals are set and key leadership is involved for sustainability.
- Check-cashing services are established.
- Disaster credit services and credit unions from Federal government to States impacted by disaster are established.
- Job training and opportunities by community members prior to and post event are offered.
- Leadership for pre-event and post-event economy is established.
- Appropriate insurance coverage is offered for homeowners and to rental properties.
- Expectations are managed.

Group III - 5

- Real financial incentives (ex. recycling of debris) are provided.
- Populace is educated on what environmental stability really is —info for public at Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), etc., on what programs exist.
- Economic limits possibilities in communities that are recognized — Manage expectations; educate to the level and opportunities.
- Growth-planning decisions that have future impacts are understood.
- Implementation and education must occur at the local, community level.
- Planning is personalized to individuals.
- Local government must “advertise” the need for preparation.
- Communication and dissemination of best practices are needed and in redundant multiple forms (clearinghouse for best practices).
- Incentives are paired with communication and utilization of best practices.
- Understand and recognize how Federal dollars can negatively or positively impact local economy (ex. housing).



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Q6. (Original Q15) What are best practices for integrating mitigation and resilience into recovery?

Group I - 6

- Local government should be better educated and funded for post-disaster and community mitigation as opposed to applicant mitigation.
- A broader application of 406 Mitigation and more flexibility by FEMA staff to support 406 applicants is needed.
- Applicants are educated on 404 Mitigation funding.
- Private Sector Preparedness (PS prep) Department of Homeland Security (DHS) certification on business preparedness — look at for incentives in post-disaster environment (SBA, etc.).
- Clearinghouse/mentoring program is established.
- Incentives to establish community resiliency for the future are developed.
- Laws and policies that are disincentives to recovery are reviewed.

Group II - 6

- Support care for the caregivers and faith based are funded.
- Long-term mental health funding and cross training is provided.
- Vulnerable populations are educated on and targeted in plans and policies.
- A positive attitude and flexibility in administering mitigation programs is stressed.
 - Laws regulations, etc., are applied to maximize resources.
- State organizations are pre-funded to train volunteers on need of mental health and development disabilities communities.

Group III - 6

- A pre-disaster recovery plan is in place that incorporates business recovery as a priority (individual/business/PNP need to be part of plan).
- Incentives are included for businesses and local government.
- Application of 406 Mitigation funding is encouraged.
 - Process is streamlined (fewer reviewers).
 - Best of pre-approved 406 is increased.
- Additional resources are needed to meet matching requirements of the hazard mitigation grants offered by FEMA. Could the State or HUD provide the funds?
- A goal is established that focuses on resiliency, preempts recovery and concentrates on aging infrastructure.
- We are not making recovery and mitigation priorities for funding (focus is on preparation and response).
- Agencies and business must know their risks/vulnerabilities then build resiliency into the entity as a means of mitigating risk.
- Resiliency is built in engineering process at start.
- Entities should be held accountable for risks.
- Current Federal/State mitigation planning effects are costly and do not engaging locals in buy-in.



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- Suggestion: Locals buy-in to State mitigation plan, which eliminates local effects, but makes sure they are partners in developing State plan.
- Citizens need to be confident that their basic needs will be met and it needs to be understandable and simple for all people to understand they will recover.
- Recognition that community recovery is dependent on individuals; need to recognize social stability and how all agencies contribute.
- Education is needed on backup plans and is needed throughout process (response and recovery).
- Government should keep focus on recovery. People forget and need to focus to remain prepared (continued awareness).
- A Federal message of planning and preparation needs to be established.
 - A risk communications plan is needed on a national level.



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ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES + COORDINATION



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Roles, Responsibilities And Coordination

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Management of recovery requires clearly defined roles with someone in charge. Participants in the Stakeholders Forum shared opinions and thoughts regarding what roles local, Tribal, State and Federal authorities, stakeholders and others play in making a recovery successful. Participants universally understand that recovery is the responsibility of local communities and local authorities with support from State and Federal governments. The State's role is to assist local governments by coordinating the procurement of supplies and other needed resources, managing recovery at the State level through direct interaction with Federal recovery partners. This is particularly true in large disasters. In general terms, the Federal government's role is as a resource provider.

Participants were united in the belief nonprofits and the private sectors need to be engaged early on to plan and help facilitate delivery of services. Participants discussed various ways to integrate nonprofits and the private sector into the recovery process right from the planning stages. However, roles need to not only be defined but coordinated as well to avoid duplication of services, provide opportunities for collaboration and to share expertise and information. Pre-disaster established relationships between recovery partners and continuity of program delivery are key at all levels. Participants want to see a better process for managing and organizing spontaneous volunteers.

EMERGING THEMES

The following major themes emerged on how the Stakeholders Forum participants see roles and responsibilities in a recovery.

- **Roles + Responsibilities**
- **Nonprofit + Private Sector Integration**
- **Coordination of People + Programs + Processes**
- **Challenges to Recovery**



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Roles + Responsibilities

While participants have a pretty clear idea what role local, Tribal, State and Federal governments play in recovery, the roles of nonprofits and private sector are less defined. The consensus is that nonprofits and the private sectors need to be involved early in the recovery process, even at pre-disaster planning stages to maximize their contributions. Relationships should be built early so local authorities and stakeholders understand nonprofit and private sector capabilities, available resources and, together, can identify and address gaps in recovery services.

Participants feel flexibility must be built into response decision-making and authorities need to allow for changes to ineffective rules. Participants said recovery efforts need to be consistent at all levels. More attention needs to be focused on compiling resources available to Tribal governments and establishing points of contact (POCs) for the seamless delivery of recovery assistance.

While local, Tribal, State and Federal roles overlap somewhat, participants were clear that local authorities manage the recovery process in concert with State and Federal agencies. Participants said local and Tribal governments are responsible for developing a recovery plan and detailed implementation of recovery initiatives. From ensuring that their constituencies understand recovery programs and how they are accessed to ensuring infrastructure is back in place, basic services are restored, recovery projects are identified and implemented, timelines met, municipal “roadblocks” to recovery are dealt with, and information is available to community members in a timely manner — among hundreds of other recovery-related tasks — local governments can become overwhelmed. It does not go unnoticed by participants that the new responsibilities that come in the wake of a disaster, are “piled on” to what are usually already full schedules for local authorities.

Participants see the State, along with Federal recovery partners, often as a convener, connector and clearinghouse, bringing stakeholders into the recovery process, helping local communities identify needs, resolve gaps in services and, in multi-jurisdictional disasters, coordinating across localities by creating and managing recovery partnerships. Participants note that States also must ensure local emergency plans are current and updated and organize the delivery, along with Federal partners, of bulk supplies like pharmaceuticals when managing through large-scale events.



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Participants define the Federal role as bringing recovery expertise and experience and, through the development of resource guides, helping communities match disaster-related needs with Federal agencies and other resource providers. From SBA loans to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grants to helping with housing strategies, workforce development, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and more, the Federal family of agencies are the powerhouse of recovery resources.

Nonprofit + Private Sector Integration

Participants feel nonprofits and the private sector have a lot to offer recovery and that they can contribute to successful recovery best by being involved in both pre- and post-event planning phases. Relationships should be built, resources identified, funding obtained, roles defined and assets mapped at that time. Participants suggest establishing an information clearinghouse for available resources and assets. Government entities should work closely with both sectors to coordinate services, maximize synergies and eliminate duplication. Special focus is needed to help smaller businesses return to operation as early as possible. To ensure recovery addresses all populations, participants feel government authorities need a free flow of information from nonprofits, faith-based organizations and other NGOs “on the ground.” To expedite economic recovery, the private sector needs to help Federal and State resource providers know what their needs are to ensure its recovery. Nonprofits have funding challenges and participants want funding provided for nonprofits to support their continued work in recovery. Participants note that recovery leadership needs to know when to “back off” — when help supplied by outsiders erodes the customer base of local businesses, from a global perspective.

Coordination of People + Programs + Processes

Participants feel roles and capacity issues must be addressed in advance of recovery in order to build credibility in the process. They advocate holding advance discussions to develop fast-track recovery projects. Training locals in recovery processes can streamline programs and processes post-disaster, thereby expediting getting resources to needs and shortening recovery timelines. Participants believe State and Federal governments play an important role in bringing all stakeholders to the table. They emphasize that ESF #14 is a valuable asset in helping communities plan and manage their recoveries, identifying needs and issues and helping with recovery project



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implementation plans as well as offering support for a coherent transfer of command and control from the response to the recovery phase.

Challenges to Recovery

Disaster brings challenges across several areas of response and recovery. One of the biggest challenges is how to harness volunteer energy and work in an organized and manageable fashion. It is suggested that staff develop and implement training programs for multiple agencies to help build recovery capacity, and perhaps coordinate drills between public and private sectors and government authorities. Participants acknowledge that logistics is a challenge in everything from debris removal to insufficient shelters to delivery of a water supply to lack of human resource capacity to aid recovery. They advocate that all capacity challenges must be identified early and that capacity needs to be assessed to determine where spontaneous volunteers can best be used.

Other challenges participants mention including limited funding for continued preparedness, especially the preparedness efforts of nonprofit and faith-based communities. Most training support is for response and not recovery — funding needs to be available for training and exercising recovery strategies. Long-term recovery assistance does not come with funding so local authorities have the added task of finding funding sources for ideas and strategies that are developed as a result of the long-term recovery planning assistance. Reimbursement funding models are a challenge when immediate cash flow is needed. Lengthy and complicated paperwork requirements to access funding resources is a burden to already overburdened local staffs — many of whom may also be dealing with personal impacts as a result of the disaster. Undocumented workers are also a challenge. Participants ask: *Who is going to identify who is accounted for and who has been helped?* Someone has to manage this issue.

INNOVATIVE IDEAS

Some of the innovative ideas and suggestions include:

- Establish an emergency access program where cardholders can get into “frozen zones” to begin work and recovery.
- Remove roadblocks to recovery due to legalities and liability issues.



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- Force pre-planning for insurance purposes.
- Establish asset mapping to inventory resources.
- Set up private sites for volunteer credentialing.
- Implement tracking system for “off the grid” people to determine who is accounted for, who can be helped.
- Create a local information clearinghouse as a one-stop for all thing recovery.
- Develop resource guides to help identify who can help.
- Create Federal-funding models that are not reimbursable so that needed cash is available “up front.”
- Create a State position that mirrors the FEMA VOAD position.
- Create and use a 311 system.
- Create a community advocacy position at the Federal level.



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Participant Responses

[NOTE: Comments are recorded by question by group so it is clear which groups responded to which questions.]

Q1. (Original Q6) What are the appropriate State, local and Tribal roles in leading disaster recovery efforts?

AM Groups V and VI - 1

- Process is managed in concert with State, local and Federal agencies and inclusive of faith-based and nonprofits. It is happening now but needs to be re-enforced.
- An emergency access program is established where cardholders can get into “frozen zones” to begin work and recovery.
 - CEAS.com is a program in place in several cities
 - It should be standardized across the country for businesses.
- Case management of existing relationships for recovery services.
 - Continuity is established.

PM Group I - 1

- State supports local government with supplies and resources they cannot get on their own.
 - State’s role is to assist.
- State has a more active role in coordination across localities by creating and managing recovery strategy in partnership.
- Local government and Tribal, in advance, need to compile a list of point of contacts for accessing long-term recovery resources.
 - For example. How do to file a FEMA claim.
 - A local information clearinghouse is built.
 - In one particular city, the 311 system exists (for those who know); outside boroughs, citizens should know how to get information quickly.
- Understanding of resources available to local government and Tribal (e.g., food, generators, conference space) is needed.
- Local municipalities’ roadblock equal legalities and liability is addressed.
- “Good Samaritan act” in law enforcement exists.
 - Act of Congress would take a long time.
- Agreements are entered into up front to mitigate liabilities pre-disaster.
 - A pre-identified approach is taken (extra riders on insurance contracts?).
 - Schools and auditoriums already have liability insurance in place: Use these assets.

Group II - 1

- Currently a State rights, Federal obligation and State authorization is needed.
- Local and State governments have more turnover (elections, staff).
 - Locals are activated and empowered to direct actions.
 - Perhaps have a Federal advocate for locals?



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- Roles and responsibilities on recovery are different from local government “day jobs.”
- Career and political (local) need to work with “on the ground” people to navigate Federal system.
- Ability to change ineffective rules is needed.
- Responsibility is at the local and State levels to have disaster response plans ahead of time.
- Stay flexible in response to spontaneous events, conditions and resources.
- Consequence of resources loss to recovery plan is identified.
- Some states do not know Tribal rules and laws; more communication and understanding is needed.
- Agreements in advance with defined lines of responsibility are needed.
- Management requires clearly defined roles and somebody in charge.
 - Identification of accountable persons is not the key — intangible.
 - Is someone leading effort through to success?

AM Groups III and IV - 1

- The State needs to assess recovery needs.
 - Resource needs from Federal government and State are identified.
- Communicate in a limited capacity to all levels involved in recovery.
 - Gaps to allow private and nonprofit response are identified.
- Consistent response at all levels is provided.
- Not everyone understands the language.
 - Identify, work with and reach out to stakeholders who may not realize their role.
- State should ensure local plans are current and updated.
- Communications to responders should be targeted.
 - Communication should not be just generic, but with desirable expectations and necessary actions.
- Convener is State and locals.
 - Stakeholders are brought into recovery and identify issues.
 - View beyond recovery is provided.
 - Expediter who gets past recovery delays is needed.
- Clarity and succinctness to identify and resolve gaps are used.
 - Capacities of all groups and their capabilities are understood.
- Roles for each organization are defined.
 - Roles are key for communication process.

AM Groups I and II - 1

- Local government is the lead.
 - Federal and State offers support.



Q2. (Original Q7) How can the nonprofit and private sectors be better integrated into recovery?

AM Groups V and VI - 1

- A liaison with nonprofits is established, same as happening with VAL.
- Reach out to private sector but an association/representative is needed for industry.
- Private and nonprofit groups are engaged.
 - Agencies can be conduit for funding (when have consistent mission as State agency).
 - There is opportunity for investment: Engage financing and banking industry to harness opportunity.
 - FEMA and other funds are leveraged.
- Resource guide is developed which lets reader know who can help and how to coordinate all groups engaged in recovery process.

PM Group I - 2

- Needs and wants of businesses and service delivery need to be taken into account at planning phase (e.g., transportation routes up and running).
- Basic outreach is used to prime contacts in forums like this to prepare and plan at pre-disaster stage.
- Private sector needs to be involved in planning phase.
- Private sector can be emulated in government by:
 - Having to do pre-disaster planning for insurance purposes.
 - Having to test effectiveness of private industry insurance plans.
- Trade organizations need to be involved in planning.
- A system needs to be put in place for effective distribution of donations.
- “Carrot” is developed for participating in pre-planning.
- Private business can help allocate resources in recovery.
- Workers in private sector need housing to get private industry up and running.
- Plan has to be in place for private sector to build housing without delay — need to have a consortium of funding sources in advance to move quickly.
- Small businesses need extra support with a cash flow to start operating again.
 - Shelter can be provided but jobs are needed for recovery.

Group II - 2

- Needs are identified early and continue to be identified as recovery needs evolve.
- Grant funding is needed for NGOs and nonprofits to include recovery planning in their efforts.
 - Capacity/knowledge are kept active.
- Ongoing recovery grant funds for NGOs and nonprofits (NPs) are established.
- Funding source for social services preparedness is established.
- There is no monolithic contract “blanket” for private sector/NPs/NGO to help pay for their assistance in recovery.
 - Mom and Pop’s need to be able to continue operative profitability: — cannot float, bringing in outsiders who can put local businesses/NPs out of business.
- Private sector is incorporated into recovery discussion.



- Priorities are set.
- Private sector rebuilding helps community rebuild.
- Power, phone, etc., need to be involved.
- Disasters are high risk.
 - A community with a plan makes private sector investment comfortable/possible.
 - They cannot always take on recovery debt.
 - What investments can help?
 - Government cannot help but can participate.
- Focus is on low-margin businesses without resilience.
- Small businesses are entrepreneurial, but do not like to share information.
- Government can organize small pieces of recovery pie (small NPs, etc.) but need to continue through recovery process.
- Back off —A metric is needed for when private sector is back online; and for government and NPs, too so that government recovery efforts do not become competitive with local businesses.
 - Metric should be judged on an individual basis (performance metrics), not on a timeline.
- In one state, free medical services drove doctors out of town; a decision on when to stop needs to be made.
 - Entrepreneurial nonprofits can have trouble backing off.
 - Organizations are proactively involved in planning. There must be frequent knowledge-sharing events.
- Local businesses are integrated into recovery planning.

AM Groups III and IV - 2

- If you get involved with locals early in planning phase, doors are then open during recovery.
- Roles are defined in advance and coordinated to avoid duplication.
- For resource groups, communication within organizations is also critical.
 - Communication should be horizontal and vertical.
- Asset mapping is provided so local agencies know who they are serving and what assets they have.
 - They also need to know vulnerabilities.
 - It goes beyond emergency staff.
 - Broad relationships are established.
- It needs to be determined if chamber of commerce has a role with nonprofits and/or government?
 - Resources are invested in educating chamber.
- Private sector is informed and engaged early.
 - ESF #14 is utilized.
 - Multi-nationals have lots of resources and are open to communication.
- Locally relevant organizations are identified.
 - Information is shared through connected plans.
- Government must understand what private sector needs to recover.
 - Information clearinghouse is established.
 - Force multiplier.
- State can learn from the private sector.
 - Example: Food retailers are most efficient at food distribution.



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- Bottom-line goals are often the same.
- Capacity issues are understood for private and nonprofits. There is a concern about ramp-up.
- Government administrative support for NGOs is centralized.
 - Knowledge transfer, communication resiliency, logistics.
- In order to get “Back to business,” we need to educate on how to get permits and licenses.
- Unintended consequences are that labor shifts in response.
- Extension of unemployment can reduce employment capacity.

AM Groups I and II - 2

- Nonprofit, private and faith-based organizations are crucial. They are first responders with a wide reach.
 - No funding is available for continued preparedness.
- Regulations need to be changed for all faith-based preparedness work.
- Donations and contracts are managed and pulled from local resources.
- State coordination of nonprofits is not the primary function for their staff and should have more recognition of the need for immediate recovery actions.
- FEMA has a coordinator with VOADs.
 - Similar positions are needed at State and local level.
- There is lots of nonprofit contribution to recovery.
- Revenue problems develop for nonprofits donations.
- VOADs is funded.
 - Clear guidelines are established to maintain VOADs independence from government; it is not an arm of government.



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Q3. (Original Q9) How can Federal, State and local disaster planning and recovery processes and programs be best coordinated?

AM Groups V and VI - 3

- A set of standards is established to filter down which must be incorporated into recovery program.
- Roles and capacities are coordinated in advance.
- Transition plan is established for rules and responsibilities among State, local and Federal agencies.

PM Group I - 3

- Credibility needs to be built with private sector.
- Recovery needs to be sped up.
- Where to go to ask for resources is identified.
 - Organizational structures and roles are needed and they need to be catalogued.
 - The tiered approach, training and teaching assistance at all levels, filters down from the top.

AM Groups III and IV - 3

- Locals are trained in recovery process.
 - Programs and processes are streamlined.
- Finite local government/business capacity for aid accountability/pre-planning of interaction is recognized.
 - It should be made a part of State disaster planning.
- Establishment of relationships and continuity are key at all levels.
- Local advance discussions are held to develop fast-track recovery projects.
- ESF #14 should transition recovery from response.
- A local mitigation plan is built into a recovery approach.
- Coordination will vary by community, based on local capacity.
 - It is not always local training.
 - Politics are a difficult dynamic.
 - The most important State/Federal role is to bring everyone to table to prepare.
- State has a supporting role in recovery process.
 - Training is focused on response.
 - They work with locals to identify their partners/resources.
- Long-term recovery does not come with money.
 - Often by the time focus is on long-term recovery other resources have been “tapped out.”
- There is often a disconnect between large cities and states. They often want and need more autonomy.
 - Relationships need to be worked out between governments.
- Capacity is limited before disaster strikes and is strained even more during recovery.
 - More resources are needed.

AM Groups I and II - 3



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- Advance preparedness utilizing a person familiar with communities funding are established.
- Training, exercises and relationships/politics are examined.
 - Recovery funding trickles away.
 - Uniformity of funding is established.
- Recovery process must pick up from response.
 - Existing process is improved to include recovery.
 - Resources are expanded.
 - Available resources are identified.
- Funding for mental health is included in recovery resources.
 - Mental health is trained and positioned to address post-disaster needs.
- Crisis counseling response funding must be fixed.
 - Focus is on recovery issues training.



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Q4. (Original Q11) What are the greatest capacity challenges that local and State governments face in disaster recovery and what are the best practices for increasing that capacity?

AM Groups V and VI - 4

- Volunteers and agency representatives showing up is a challenge when they have been affected by disaster.
- Insufficient numbers of shelters are available.
- FEMA's reimbursement process to State agencies.
 - Process is a funding challenge.
 - The additional paperwork makes State and local matches difficult.
 - FEMA provides 1:1 reimbursement.
- Debris management is greater than solid waste capacity.
- There is a lack of capacity to get people water. A regional contractor is needed to coordinate distribution amongst different agencies (staff) to access private entities.
- Better process is needed for organizing and managing spontaneous volunteers.
- Agencies need to assess capacity needs where spontaneous volunteers can be used best.
 - Plan should be developed for management.

Group VI - 4

- Surge capacity. Volunteers are likely to arrive in significant numbers. Harness volunteer energy and work with community groups. Make arrangements to use private sites for volunteers credentialing
- A plan (local up) is established and put in place for recovery that focuses on communication, responsibility and identification:
 - Private businesses are involved in plan and testing/drilling.
- Point of distribution is established for pharmacy supplies:
 - Distribution is coordinated with counties.
 - Workers are recruited and trained.
- With a plan in place, staff is still needed to play roles and a training program for multiple agencies is needed to build extra capacity.
- Logistics are a problem:
 - Needs, capacity and resources are identified.
 - Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources (CIKR) for public and private sector needs, tools (GIS).
 - Public sector may not have logistics, tools, knowledge and capacity.
 - Long recovery trail must be kept organized.
 - Educational institutions can be used as resource.
- Human resource capacity affects relationships.
 - Language capacity is underserved.
 - Capacity is identified and built.
 - This is key for public and private sectors.



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Q5. (Original Q13) What unmet needs are common to most disasters that do not seem to be adequately addressed under the current systems and programs?

AM Groups V and VI -5

- More joint planning between public and private sector partnerships can be improved so the private sector can get up and running.
- Faith-based organizations and NGOs need funding to support their contributions to the recovery effort. — DHS report outlines.
 - There is a disconnect between groups due to a lack of communication.
- Drills between public and private sectors need coordination. A real simulation needs to be held, not just a tabletop exercise.

Group I - 5

- Coherent transfer of command and control is developed for long-term recovery.
- Disabled community (hearing, sight) and language) is reached out to.
- Housing x3 in large disaster, huge medium to long to long-term problem.
- Better integration is needed of clashing Federal housing assistance programs.
 - They do not work together now.
- Housing strategy for urban environment and for a cold weather environment are needed.
 - Existing affordable housing will worsen in a disaster.
- Housing and public health needs to be strengthened now to ease recovery later.
- Effective volunteer management are identified.
- The public is educated on evacuation and later on repopulation.

Group VI - 5

- Information is shared throughout the process.
 - Private sector credentialing for debris removal is a priority.
- Information sharing does not equal interoperability.
 - Public/private information vetting needs to be understood.
- Funding is needed for planning, testing and drilling tabletop exercises.
 - This is how connections, problems and concerns are made and identified.
- Three (3) human service needs to be addressed. Those are:
 - Transitional and long-term housing.
 - Undocumented population.
 - No government resources are available, so tracking is expensive and time consuming.
 - Where does coordination fall?
 - There is governmental control of nonprofits following 9/11.
 - More collaboration is.
 - Private and nonprofit cannot afford sustained coordination.
 - There is little private funding for disaster planning.
 - Less than one- (1-) year case management post-disaster needed.
- People are lost in the cracks: Especially undocumented workers. If there is no employer or if the employer is not tracking, it is difficult to identify who is accounted for and who has been helped.



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- Someone must manage this problem.
- One state uses Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) money for “house hardening.”
 - \$1 preparation saves \$7 recovery.
 - Money should be used for mitigation, not infrastructure.
- We need communication on available services and funding.
 - People need to be educated before a disaster.
 - Comprehensive information is offered after.
 - There needs to be more coordination and cooperation across all sectors.
- People are identified who can distribute information (clergy, etc.) and get information to them on preparedness, not response.

AM Groups I and II - 5

- Mental health treatment and training is provided.
 - It includes treatment and training for domestic violence.
- Long-term training is provided for clergy.
 - They assess and feed mental health services through faith-based VOADs.
 - A human services council is established — agency administrative network (like VOAD) different from organization.
- Before disaster “closes,” unmet needs and resources are identified.
 - Widespread coordination/meeting is conducted with stakeholders.
- We need to work with all stakeholders to identify unmet needs.
- Hidden populations have the most unmet needs.
 - Aid is funneled through faith communities now.
- Government is different from faith communities.
 - Government is also different from social services arm.
 - Service agencies are connected to the clergy.
- Training — acknowledges distinct starting point in planning.
- The recovery process needs to be exercised all inclusively.
- Input is gathered from direct responders and those affected.
- FEMA policies should enhance how aid to be used but the opposite has happened recently.



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Q6. (Original Q16) What else would you like us to know?

AM Groups V and VI - 6

- Money and staff are needed to implement good ideas; States and cities do good job but still fall short.
- More responsibility needs to be placed on individuals; public needs to better prepare themselves.
- Citizens need communication and they need to know why and how to respond to become empowered responders.
- Public needs leadership to manage the recovery process.
- Education is needed on backup plans and throughout process (response and recovery).
- Government should keep focus on recovery because people forget. They need to focus to remain prepared and to have continued awareness.
- Federal message should focus on planning and preparation.
 - Risk communications plan is needed on a national level.